

Acton Historic District Commission
Meeting March 6, 2012
Minutes

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Meeting opened at 7:32 by Chair, Kathy Acerbo-Bachman (KAB).

Also present were Anita Rogers (AR), Ron Rose (RR), Michaela Moran (MM) and David Barrat (DB).

There were no citizens' concerns.

Approval of 2/21/12 minutes postponed until March 13, 2012 meeting.

7:35 Twin Seafood sign: Jon Loblundo (JL) co-owner of Twin Seafood appeared to discuss several slightly different iterations of the proposed sign to be placed on the premises. Four proposals were dark lettering on a white background and another four were white lettering on a dark background. All had the same or similar depiction of two fish as a logo at the top middle of the sign and a banner at the bottom containing the words "Grill and Market." There were differences in the fonts used in each of the proposed signs. AR preferred the dark background, fish slightly separated, and white background on the banner. Also like the shadow font shown on the second illustration from the top. MM Prefers the white lettering on dark background. Likes the fish logo in the second sign from the top with fish "pulled apart." Prefers a font with a serif and solid as in the top illustration. JL Prefers the second from the top. Is also considering a projecting or blade sign. RR Also prefers the fish logo in the second from the top and the simpler lettering in the top illustration. Prefers dark lettering for the banner and bigger as shown in the 3rd illustration from the top. Would like to see scallops included. Also would like to see the words "Twin Seafood" closer to center between the top and bottom of the sign. JL will try to redesign the fish logo to move the words closer to the center. DB prefers the banner shown in #3 combined with sign shown in #1 and the fish logo of example #3. JL to return on March 13 with revisions for vote by HDC. Time to be determined later. JL to check with Scott Mutch for dimensional requirements for sign on the face of the building. JL also to consider use of a projecting sign. He would be limited to six square feet of area, much smaller than the proposed wall sign. Application must be voted on by March 23 unless applicant gives permission for HDC to extend time. JL asked if an awning could be installed and contain a sign and have another wall sign.

8:00 Application for placement of photo-voltaic panels at 543 Mass Avenue and companion issue of placement of photo-voltaic panels on roof of building at 3 Spruce Street. The latter application has been prepared by applicant but not yet received by HDC as formal application. Mathias Rosenfeld (MR) and Javier (?) appeared as applicants. The solar panels would be placed on the roof of the former church at 543 Mass. Ave. It would be visible from the street. Installation would require removal of slate on the roof beneath the solar panels. The panels are 3.5" thick and would be placed 1.5" above the roof for a total elevation of 5.5" from the roof surface. This would mean they would be visible over the end caps of the building. Use of the solar panels would make a statement of concern for the environment.

The panels would produce 17 thousand watt-hours of power. KAB There is a question of whether 3 Spruce Street is in the HD. AR to confirm either way. The building at 3 Spruce is low and set back a considerable distance from the street and, while visible from Spruce Street, is not a significant structure. The building would contain 67 panels. Applicant would also like to put a steel roof on the building prior to installation of the panels. AR Has no issue with 3 Spruce Street. Does not understand why slate must be removed from the church at 543 Mass. Ave. Hesitant to approve this application because to the significance of that building. KAB Also has no problem with solar panels on the building at 3 Spruce Street. Does not favor panels on the roof at 543 Mass. Ave. Approval would open Pandora's box. HDC would have to allow solar panels on other buildings in the West Acton HD to the denigration of the district. MM Also would approve panels at 3 Spruce Street. Is opposed to solar panels at 543 Mass. Ave. Concerned about the removal of the slate roof. Could not enforce the replacement of the slate should the panels be removed at a later time. Need to preserve the building. Panels are not appropriate here. RR Okay with 3 Spruce Street. Opposes solar panels on roof of 543 Mass. Ave. It is too significant a building. Would not be appropriate. DB concurs all prior opinions regarding 3 Spruce Street and 543 Mass. Ave.

MM moves that the application to install photo-voltaic panels on the roof of 543 Mass. Ave. be denied as it would denigrate the character of the building and district by having solar panels more than 5" above the roof and the end caps of the building as well as requiring the removal of slate from the roof of the building. Seconded by RR. Finding that building at 543 Mass. Ave. is within the jurisdiction of the HDC. Motion to deny said application passed unanimously.

AR noted that she would approve the application for installation of solar panels at 3 Spruce Street when presented. KAB concurs. MM and DB want to see more information about the steel roof to be installed along with the solar panels. MR will add information regarding the steel roof to the Spruce Street application. He will appear on March 13 to discuss the application further.

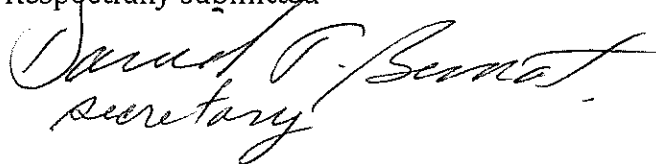
8:30 Revision of Rules and Regulations and By-laws for Town Meeting. It was determined that there isn't enough time to prepare all proposed changes in time for Town Meeting. It will be presented at a subsequent town meeting. MM to commence drafting proposed changes to the by-law provisions concerning signs in the historic districts and HDC's rules and regulations.

RR to inquire from Dean Charter why the stone wall behind 468 was torn down.

We are currently waiting for a letter from D.O.R concerning the propriety of using CPC funds to finance the low/no interest loans to preserve historically significant buildings in Acton, and if the town can administer it. CPC declined to fund the landscaping for the train station.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted


Secretary